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THE CHRISTIAN PILOT,

AND

GOSPEL MORALIST.

EDITED BY GEORGE HARRIS.

AUGUST, 1850.

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No. 19. AUGUST, 1850. VOL. II.

HINDRANCES TO THE LORD'S TABLE REMOVED.

BY THE REV. J. R. BEARD, D.D.

(Concluded from page 325.)

Connected with the hindrances of exclusiveness are the hindrances of timidity. Often have I received for answer to my private invitations the words, "I am not fit," "I am not good enough," "I must first be more constant in my attendance on ordinary occasions." Such a feeling in itself I would by no means discourage. It is its application that is wrong. A lowly mind is a scriptural token of true discipleship. It was for his unaffected humility that the publican found favour before God, while the self-righteous Pharisee was sent away as empty as he came. But if a lowly mind is a passport to God s favour, it is no proper hindrance to the table of his Son. Jesus himself was meek and lowly in heart, and if the same mind is in us that was also in him, surely we are thereby qualified for communion with him in the Christian Passover. You still plead, "You are not fit." What would be the worth of the plea in the sick man's mouth? Unfit for the physician! The sick man's disorder is his claim for special attention. Is the plea listened to when uttered by ignorant children? Too ignorant for school! Not more absurd is the plea than "too unholy for the Lord's table." Surely the place where Jesus entertained a Peter who denied, and a Judas who betrayed him, is not a spot whence any earnest disciple need keep away, from a consciousness of sins that he hates, and shortcomings that he deplores. But if un-

fit for the Communion, how is it you are fit for any other means of religious improvement? If unfit to receive the grace of God at the table, what makes you think you are fit to receive it in the pew? Abstain altogether from public worship; I can understand your act, you have renounced Christ, or fancy you can better learn of him in private. But surely if you are fit to be a hearer you are not unfit to be a communicant; if fit to receive the instructions of a fellow man, and to worship God on the wings of common prayer, you are equally fit to remember Jesus while eating the bread and drinking the wine which show forth his death.

Besides, if you are unfit now when will you be fit? Is there growth or decay in your soul? Are your religious perceptions becoming more vivid or more dim? Is the Lord's day becoming a delight or a wearisomeness? Is your attendance on public worship more or less frequent than aforetime? If improvement is going on, would that improvement be hindered by compliance with your Lord's request? And might not any declension be stopped, and its causes be rooted out, should you listen and obey? Unfit to comply with a dying injunction given by Christ! You are then, it seems, fit to refuse, fit and ready to say "No" to his invitation, and fit, I may presume, and ready also to take the natural and inevitable consequences. And if among those results should be a general hardening of mind against Christ's words, and the claims of religious duty, and a consequent darkening of the inner light; if a veil of sense should come over your spiritual nature, concealing the Divine countenance and disturbing you with its shades, you will then indeed be unapt if not unfit for those religious exercises which God has appointed as means of our improvement and channels of his grace, and which he withdraws or bestows in the precise degree in which we either employ or neglect them. "Unfit?" Yes, in one sense you are. We are all unfit to remember Jesus or speak to God. But our unfitness is our title of admission to the "feast of fat things." It was "the lost" that Jesus came to seek and save. In strictness of speech who is fit for the worship of Infinite Perfection? Yet the most unfit and the least unfit are alike

admitted on the common ground of a boundless mercy. Worship now that you are unfit, and your unfitness will pass away. And when you become most fit to remember Jesus, then will you also be most ready, most willing, and most able to keep all God's commands.

Another form of the hindrance which timidity puts in the way, is found in a fear of assuming responsibilities which you may be unable to fulfil. "If I sit down at the Lord's table, I must be holier than others, certainly holier than I have been. It is a sort of vow. I dare not take it upon myself." You are quite mistaken. It is no vow. You undertake nothing new. All your obligations are of long standing, nor can they be increased or diminished by any vow or promise. "Vows in heaven" are idle words. Your duties originate with God, not with yourself. You are already under all the possible responsibilities which can fall to the man and the Christian. If you wish to lessen your moral obligations, give up the name of Christ, or rather strip off your nature as a man. Augment them you cannot, for they are full to the greatest measure of your capacity. What! do you think that God has left moral obligation optional? that there is some field of duty into which you may innocently enter, or enter not? What then does "duty" mean? Surely duty is that which is due from man to God. Duties are debts, and it is ourselves and all our powers in their highest possible reaches, that we owe to our Creator, Saviour, and Lord.

But now look yourself carefully at the plea and see if it is one of which you need not be ashamed. "If I sit down at the Lord's table I must be holier than I have been." And on that account you abstain. So then you do not wish to be holier than you are? In other words you practically wish to remain in your sins. And yet you call yourself a follower of Him who said "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." No! no better than you are—the same dimness of spiritual vision, the same fluttering of hope and fear, the same dark thoughts and restless questionings, and distressing doubts; the same evil dispositions, the same bad tempers, the same domestic strifes. No! no better; but are you prepared to be worse? unfit for communing

with Christ, do you wish to become fit and exclusively fit for communing with evil beings and evil powers? Take heed, lest grieving the Holy Spirit of God, you are abandoned to the darkness that you almost appear to love.

Others are kept from the Lord's table by a dislike of spiritual assumption. Averse to pretension of all kinds they are afraid of being thought to affect a virtue which they do not possess. Now to pretension and affectation Christianity is a deadly foe. Your dislike of pretension and affectation are, I believe, in perfect agreement with the mind of Christ. That dislike itself I cordially approve. But is the source from which it comes equally laudable? You are afraid, it seems, to be thought overrighteous. "To be thought" by whom? God always knows what you really are and ever rewards you according to your works. It is man's eye then of which you stand afraid? Or if you disown fear, then it comes to this that you allow man's eye to turn you aside from a Christian duty. Yes! practically your question is not what ought I to do? what is God's will? but what will the world say? how will my act appear in the sight of this friend or that customer? True most true is it that "the fear of man bringeth a snare," (Prov. xxix. 25). So then you regard man's word more than Christ's word, and, with all your professed Christian belief, are content to risk futurity with all its deep realities and fearful contingencies, relying on an inversion of the Apostles' resolution, and declaring "I must obey man rather than God," (Acts v. 29).

Finally, the abuses connected with this Ordinance are hindrances to the Lord's table. Those abuses, I confess, are huge and almost incredible. Corrupt indeed must be tendencies in that nature which so early as some twenty years after its appointment, could convert this simple breaking of bread and tasting of wine, into the selfishness, gluttony and inebriation which attended the Supper in the church at Corinth, (1 Cor. xi). Equally is it a token of corruption that the simplest of all rites should have been transmuted into the most awful and the most stupendous of all mysteries; by which the great majority of the Christian world have been led to

believe that the Creator of the universe, is, every time Mass is performed, transubstantiated on the altar by a man's hand into a wafer. Other abuses—only too numerous and too painful—may be pointed out. The supper has been degraded into a "Sacrament," being made first into an oath, then into a test, and finally into a shibboleth. The soldier, the politician and the priest have each used this truly sacred thing for their own unworthy purposes. And still is it used as a cloak by the licentious and the designing. Some too may find in the observance a soothing cordial to which they have no claim, and may make it a substitute for justice, mercy and truth. And to these gross improprieties some non-communicants are very ready to point the finger, "See," they say, "what should I gain by taking the Communion?"

In these lamentable abuses is found one of the greatest hindrances to the Lord's table. Yet here again there is an entire absence of reasonable justification What! is the prevalence of an abuse a solid reason against any use whatever. The best things have been most perverted. The best things from their nature are most liable to perversion. What is dearer or holier than woman's love? Yet what more foul in its degradations? Do you refuse food because it is the safest and most effectual channel for the conveyance of poison? Shall we take part with those who would withold mental power, because it may be turned to bad purposes? Shall the prevalence of superstition make us enemies to religion, or shall we abstain from cultivating piety, because fanaticism here or there abounds?

I fear that even persons who profess to call no one Lord but Christ, are by no means free from this leaven of unreasonableness. The abuses of the popular religious systems have gone some way in stripping Unitarians of religion. Because others have been bigotted, we have become indifferent, and because others are fanatical we shrink from the due cultivation and proper expression of the devotional affections. And because the Lord's table has been made a burning mount like Sinai, or a most holy and most exclusive place, like the Jewish Sanctuary, or a shrine of iniquity and abomination, like

the secret places of the heathen divinities—for these and other abuses, many have deserted the spot where Jesus appointed to meet his disciples in spirit, as well as in love, purity, and truth. All that can be said in extenuation is, that such is the weakness of our nature, that from one extreme men are ever driven to another. A change, however, has commenced. A better spirit is rising. Communicants are more numerous. Public worship receives greater attention. Men begin to acknowledge that the opposite of wrong is not necessarily right; that the first business of every responsible being is to do right and be right from a sole regard to God's will. What is it to you or to me that our fellow professors or fellow men use or abuse the Lord's Supper? judge us truly or judge us falsely in our actions? One thing is needful, one alone, namely, that we stand right with our conscience and right with God.

And now finally, without presuming to condemn any one, I put it to the conscience of each disciple not accustomed to eat and drink in remembrance of Christ, whether he can justify his refusal in the sight of the Judge of the quick and the dead.?

I have endeavoured in these remarks to use great plainness of speech, for I am specially desirous that my words should reach the mind of as many as possible of those who are in and above the age of youth and early manhood, whether lettered or unlettered, rich or poor. Earthly distinctions are unknown to Christ. Earthly distinctions should be unknown in his visible church. To each then is the invitation addressed—

> "Come, said Jesus' sacred voice,
> Come, and make my paths your choice;
> I will guide you to your home,
> Weary pilgrim, hither come."

THO' I AM BLIND, I STILL CAN SEE.

[These lines were composed by a respected Friend, whose life has been actively devoted to the spread of Christian truth, freedom, and righteousness. Though deprived, in later years, of the blessing of eyesight, the loss has not stayed his Ministerial labours. Still he continues to speak to his Congregation the words of Christian truth and soberness, and to give an impressive lesson of cheerful acquiescence in the Divine Will, and of rejoicing hope that all things are ordered by Infinite Wisdom, and Goodness.—EDITOR.]

YES! I am blind—this outward eye
No more may gaze upon the face
Of hill, or dale, or sea, or sky—
All blank to me is every place.

The flower-deck'd field no more I see,
Nor look upon the forest green,
Nor scan the fruit-enamelled tree,
Nor view the God-sent harvest scene.

The landscape lost through loss of sight,
The stars all blotted from the sky,
No sun by day, nor moon by night;
What then remains but pine and die?

Yet there remains the inward sight,
And memory still retains her throne,
While hope yet sheds undying light,
And faith makes future things her own.

Through these I see e'en in the night
The countless beauties of the day,
And objects of this mental sight
Pass not like outward forms away.

Whene'er I gaze, the world appears
With hill, and dale, and coast, and sea,
And seasons, too, and former years,
And friends, and home, and social glee.

Whene'er I look, the flowers are there,
And forest green, and harvest white,
And sun so clear, and moon so fair,
And stars all smiles to glad the night.

Then up the vista of the past,
I see the shapes of earth's first years,
And down the future, trace the last
That shall to man bring joys or tears.

And far remote from earth and time,
More glorious scenes will meet my view,
All perfect types of things sublime,
For ever old, for ever new.

What tho' I'm blind, I still can see
That Light, with which no sun may vie,
There, where my dwelling is to be,
I'll gaze in gladness till I die.

Chorley. H. C.

THE PARABLES OF CHRIST.

LECTURE IX.

The Good Samaritan,—LUKE x. 30—37.

THE parables of our Lord teach us a very beautiful morality, as well as a very rational and cheering piety; and the more they are studied, the more will they tend to promote pure and undefiled religion in the world, and make mankind good and happy. They are, moreover, very attractive, and excite a deep interest. So that they cannot fail to exert a powerful influence upon the mind. Who, for instance, has not heard of "*The Good Samaritan?*" Who has not read it, or reflected upon it with admiration? And what heart has not been made better, by the spirit of genuine benevolence which it breathes?

This inimitable parable next invites our attention. It arose from a question put to our Saviour. And it may be well to give the occasion, in connection with the parable; beginning at the 25th verse:—"And behold, a certain lawyer* stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, what is written in the law? how readest thou? And he, answering, said, Thou shalt

---

* "*A Teacher of the Law.*" See Dr. A. Clarke, Matthew xxii. 35.

love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came by a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do thou likewise." Luke x. 25—37.

It is difficult to say whether the language in which this parable is expressed, or the sentiment which it breathes, is more beautiful. A short time ago, Jesus had sent messengers to a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him; or prepare for his entertainment or refreshment on the way. He was not, however, suffered so much as to enter the place, in consequence of party-animosity existing between the Jews and the Samaritans, on religious disputes. His disciples, or at least James and John, were so indignant at the insult, that, if they had had the power, they would have called down fire from heaven to destroy the inhospitable and rude men. "But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And probably weary with travelling, and needing rest

and refreshment, he went with them to another village. He had thus been recently treated by some of the Samaritans. But true to his whole character, as the prince of peace, and the Saviour of men, he has here, in this beautiful parable, honoured one of that people; he has honoured him to thousands and millions, and to generations after generations, to the remotest period of time. For who has not heard, where the name of Jesus is known, of "*The Good Samaritan?*" All have united, as by common consent, to give him this title; though it is not found in the parable, or any thing resembling it. Nevertheless, it is very appropriate. And it is on every lip; from lisping infancy, to trembling old age; and all seem to love and revere it. And what Jesus has honoured, the artist has perpetuated on the living canvas; from the finest touches of the pencil, to the rudest strokes of art; from the highest efforts of genius, to the humblest attempts of the painter's skill. So that wherever Jesus is known, "*The Good Samaritan*" is known, and known to be admired and loved. He is held in the highest veneration, and some ideal representation of him is presented to the eye. It is honourable to mankind, that they evince so much delight in perpetuating the remembrance, and proclaiming the praise of a character so truly benevolent. And it will be so for ever. For "this beautiful parable," as *Livermore* very justly observes, "has made 'the good Samaritan' an immortal name for all that is generous and humane."

In order to perceive the full force of the parable, we should remember that at the time when Jesus delivered it, the Jews and the Samaritans were violently opposed to each other, in all the bitterness of religious animosity and party-spirit. There was a deadly hatred existing between them; an instance of which I have already mentioned, where our Saviour and his disciples, because they were Jews, were not suffered to enter one of the Samaritan villages, but were treated with great inhospitality and rudeness. Thus, also, when Jesus conversed with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, she expressed her surprise, that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of her, a woman of Samaria. "For the Jews," it is added, "have no dealings with the Samaritans." Such was the

state of feeling between these two parties, when Jesus delivered the parable.

It may be well to remember this ; and also some other things. *Livermore* says, that "the recent affair in Samaria, chap. ix. 52–56," which I have already mentioned, "and the circumstance, that Jesus himself was, not unlikely, now on his journey to Jerusalem, near the place where the scene is laid, perhaps suggested the parable."

Jericho was 19 miles east from Jerusalem ; and "the road," observes the same writer, "lay through mountainous defiles, and was infested by banditti ; it was called, even in later times, the Bloody Way. An English traveller, in 1820, was stripped naked by the Arabs, and left severely wounded on this road. A late writer, speaking of this dreary route, which he had visited, says—'Here the unfeeling act of passing by a fellow-creature in distress, as the priest and Levite are said to have done, strikes one with horror, as an act almost more than inhuman. And here, too, the compassion of the good Samaritan is doubly virtuous, from the purity of the motive which must have led to it, in a spot where no eyes were fixed on him, to draw forth the performance of any duty, and from the courage which was necessary to admit of a man's exposing himself, by such delay, to the risk of a similar fate to that from which he was endeavouring to rescue a fellow-creature.'"

Yet dangerous as the road was, the Priests and Levites were, perhaps, the most frequent travellers on it ; for "great numbers of them," says *Livermore*, "resided at Jericho, and they were often called to Jerusalem to take part, in their turn, in the Temple service ;" and it would be no unusual thing to find them often passing and repassing that way. It was so at the time of our Saviour, as they then resided in considerable numbers at Jericho.

(Lecture IX. to be concluded in our next No.)

In the Parable of the Good Shepherd, p. 305 of the *Christian Pilot*, beginning of the first paragraph, the expression *self-directed sacrifice* should be *self-devoted sacrifice*.

CHURCH OF ENGLANDISM.

No. VIII.

THE SUBSCRIPTION IT REQUIRES.

(*Continued from page 317.*)

In the conclusion of our last paper, we proved that every Clergyman of the Establishment is compelled to declare and subscribe his conviction that the Common Prayer "containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God;" and that each and every of the Thirty-nine Articles is "agreeable to the Word of God;" and that he binds himself to understand every sentence contained in both compilations "in the literal and grammatical sense." In what a condition of intellectual slavery, in what a condition of spiritual thraldom is every one thus placed, who takes orders in the Parliamentary Church; and how numerous and weighty are the fetters, hung, not upon the bodies, but upon the minds and consciences of each, from the Archbishop upon his throne to the poorest curate that starves in a rural parish! "Nothing contrary to the Word of God," in the entire book of Common Prayer, with all its ceremonies and services! It would be a standing miracle, if the statement were true. Is it commanded anywhere in the Holy Scriptures, the only guide for a Christian, and especially for a Protestant Christian, that we should worship towards the East? or that we should bow at the name of Jesus, and not equally at that of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, the other two elements of the popular Godhead? or that the Sign of the Cross should be made over infants in baptism? or that the Lord's Supper should be withheld from all, who think it Popish to kneel while they receive it? Can the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, or the idle and pernicious ceremony of Confirmation, or the assumption of the Bishop that he communicates the Holy Ghost when he ordains a Priest, or the power assumed in the Order for visiting the Sick to give absolution to the invalid if he desire it, or to the expression in the Burial Service of "the sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life" for even the most worthless, immoral, and profane; can all or any of these be defended, by direct appeal "to the Law and to the Tes-

timony?" Is there no room for difference of opinion on the propriety and rectitude of any of these things? and has not their existence been openly lamented by many of the brightest ornaments of the Church itself? Yet every Clergyman has not only said but declared, not only declared but signed, the declaration, with both Christian name and surname, that none of these rites, none of these practices, none of these doctrines, is "contrary to the Word of God!"

Concerning the ARTICLES, similar questions may be propounded. The second declares, "As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also it is to be believed that he went down *into hell*." If this is to be taken, as commanded in "His Majesty's declaration," "in the literal and grammatical sense," it signifies that he went to the place of the damned; and so, we doubt not, the framers of the Article understood it. The fourth states that "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with *flesh, bones*, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, *wherewith* he ascended into heaven;" thus contradicting what Paul says, in 1 Cor. xv. 50, "that flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God." The sixth describes the Holy Scriptures as consisting of "those Canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church;" and yet it is a matter of Ecclesiastical History, that doubts were long entertained whether the Epistle to the Hebrews, the 2nd Epistle of Peter, the 2nd and 3rd Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the book of Revelation, had sufficient claim to be included among the sacred writings of the Christians. The eighth Article declares that "The three creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed;" though they mutually contradict each other, contradict the Church's own first and second Articles, and contradict both Christian Truth and Christian Charity. To advance at a quicker pace, the ninth affirms, that "every person born into the world deserveth God's wrath and damnation." The eighteenth pronounces the eternal ruin of the whole heathen world, declaring, "They are to be held accursed

that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature." The twentieth asserts that, "The Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith." The thirty-eighth, among sundry other things, affirms the Christian lawfulness both of Capital Punishments and of Wars; two subjects on which the sincere followers of Jesus, of every creed, are rapidly coming to an opposite conclusion. It says, "the laws of the realm may punish Christian men with death for heinous and grievous offences;" and again, "It is lawful for Christian men, at the command of the Magistrate, to wear weapons and serve in the wars." All these involve points on which the Clergy of the Establishment may be expected to be, and on which it is known they actually are, of different opinions; yet every one of them has been compelled to subscribe a declaration, and, if he ever receives preferment, will be compelled to repeat the subscription, that the affirmative of each of these points "is agreeable to the Word of God."

One fact, and that of recent occurrence, or rather of present existence, will show how Subscription interferes with the public and unprofessional duties of Clergymen, their duties to their country and to humanity, their duties as philanthropists and Christian reformers. On the committee of the metropolitan "Society for the abolition of Capital Punishment" is to be found the name of "the Rev. Thomas Pyne, M.A., Vicar of Hook, Surrey." He evidently takes a great interest in that question, for not only is he on the London Committee, but he has published an admirable tract in behalf of the cause it advocates, entitled, "*A Plea for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.*" Moreover, we find that the same gentleman attended the late Peace Congress at Paris. For the success of this movement, also, he must experience no ordinary anxiety, as is evidenced, not only by his submitting to the expense and fatigue of a long journey, but by his advocating the cause in a speech at the Congress. Now, mark the humiliating, inconsistent, *unconscientious* position in which Subscription has placed

him! He opposes Capital Punishment, he declares that it is hostile to the spirit of the Gospel; he opposes War, he declares that *it* is hostile to the spirit of the Gospel; yet, before he became a Vicar, he "willingly and *ex animo*" signed a document, expressing his conviction that the thirty-eighth Article, which asserts the lawfulness of Capital Punishment, and the lawfulness of War, was "agreeable to the word of God;" and if his Diocesan should make an Arch-deacon of him to-morrow, it is within the bounds of possibility, that, rather than lose the preferment, he would sign the same document again.

The having to subscribe the Articles and Common Prayer alone, were there no other reason, is a sufficient ground for refusing to take orders in the Established Church; sufficiently justifies our fathers for avoiding such a connection, and us their children for continuing the estrangement. The evil effects of Subscription are innumerable. It at once acts as a barrier to the progress of Religious Truth. Discoveries may be made in eastern lands and of eastern customs, casting new light on the meaning of the Scriptures; new MSS. or Versions may be found, proving that some passages now received are spurious, or giving better or more probable readings than are contained in the vulgar text; researches into Jewish literature of the same period may inform the world that Paul used some phrases, of frequent occurrence in his writings, in a sense very different from what we affix to them; many other things of a similar character may yet appear, which shall have an important bearing on the doctrine really taught in the New Testament; but the Clergy of the Establishment are forbidden to advance with the age; they are bound to the Articles made in 1562, and to the Prayer Book as settled at the same period; they have sworn (for it is tantamount to that) to abide by all the propositions those two works contain, "in their literal and grammatical sense;" and from that sense if they swerve, it is at their peril.

What a bait for conscience—and a gilded one too, the most irresistible of all—is this Subscription! It is inconceivable, it is morally impossible, that among so

many hundreds of statements, on the most difficult and most disputed of all subjects, any man, however elastic his credulity, can really believe them all. Yet here comes one, who has spent all the small patrimony he possessed in qualifying himself at the University for entrance into the church. Before him are a valuable living and social rank, behind him are privation and obscurity, and between him and the living lies the Paper ready for his signature. He disbelieves some of its statements, and he doubts many more; but the Bishop and the State say, in effect if not in words, "Sign or Starve." Alas! the temptation is too strong; "his poverty if not his will consents;" and for gold, perhaps in his case needful gold, he makes shipwreck of a good conscience.

But some of our readers may be ready to ask, "How does all this concern *us, the laity?*" Be not deceived; it is intimately connected with your dearest, your most important, your eternal interests. Why have you religious teachers at all? why do you choose them, pay them, frequent their ministrations? Is it not that they may use their labour, their leisure, their learning, in seeking after and in unfolding to you, Evangelical truth, Gospel truth, the truth as it is in Jesus? Now remember, they cannot acquire the truth themselves, and you can never be sure that they offer even what they consider the truth to you, *unless you leave them perfectly free*. It is not only idle, it is mockery, it is even insanity, to say to your instructors, "Search everywhere, search honestly, search boldly, for this pearl of great price;" if you so bind their understandings and their consciences by Articles, Prayer Books, Confessions, or Creeds, that they cannot turn in their investigations either to the right hand or to the left. No! if you wish to improve in Christian doctrine, to "grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," you must have your Pastors perfectly untrammelled. Bind them to nothing; force them not to abide by present convictions, if more light breaks in upon them; encourage them in the practical use of their liberty, even when it leads to results at variance with your own opinions. Then may you expect yourselves to attain a truer faith, better and purer notions of God and Christ, and duty and eternity;

and so to possess also greater facilities for bringing forth the natural fruits of such attainments, in lives becoming the Religion, both of spirituality and of freedom, which it is your privilege to possess.

R. E. B. M.

REGISTER; RELIGIOUS AND PHILANTHROPIC.

August 1, 1850.

London District Unitarian Society.—The origination of this Society was noticed in our number for June, and we lauded it as a needful and important agency. On Thursday evening, May 23, its First *Soiree* was held in the Freemason's Hall, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Mr. Alderman and Sheriff Lawrence presided. The explanatory statement made by Mr. J. C. Lawrence, one of the Secretaries, was of very interesting character, and indicated right and useful aims. About four hundred persons were present, and addresses were made by the Chairman, the Revds. J. H. Thom, H. Hutton, T. Madge, E. Tagart, R. M. Montgomery, of Taunton, S. Bache, Dr. Sadler, and Mr. H. Preston, jun. This meeting disappointed us. It did not realize our conceptions of what it should have been. The opening jarred with our feelings. The inauguration of a Religious Society might have found more appropriate commencement than the toast of one, who, however estimable in herself, and worthy of honour on suitable occasions, it could not be forgotten is the Head of a State Endowed Trinitarian Church. A hymn of thanksgiving, invocation of the throne of Divine Grace, would have been more seemly, and harmonized the feelings to a holier spirit for sacred themes. The effect of the proceedings on minds unacquainted with Unitarian principles, but seeking that knowledge, would have been, judging from our own, repulsive. Anxious for the well-doing of the London District Unitarian Society, we have felt it a duty to make these observations. Wishing it well, believing it calculated to effect extensive good, the more necessary is it that its proceedings should be without reproach, or occasion of gainsaying. Union is strength, but charge and countercharge is not the way to its acquisition. The announcement of the plans of the Committee, June 14, is excellent, and gives promise of wisely directed labour, of happiest augury. To the contemplated efforts we heartily wish success.

The Christian Tract Society, associated for the publication of Tracts designed to inculcate moral conduct on Christian principles, held its Forty-first Anniversary at 142, Strand, on Friday, May 24, James Esdaile, Esq., presided, and Mr. J. E. Clennell, of Hackney, read the Report. The usefulness of this Society might be increased by additional support. It is worthy to receive that support, and we hope may obtain it. The Memoirs of Mrs.

Fry is the only new work, which, in the past year, the Committee have been able to add to the Catalogue. Nothing can be better of their kind than many of the publications of this Society, and were they known as they ought to be, would speedily supersede the mawkish and puerile sheets, filled with the slang and cant of party, whose tendency is to repel, rather than encourage, reading.

JERSEY.—This lovely and picturesque Island has many attractions for the admirers of beautiful and diversified scenery. There are peculiarities about it which at once attract and rivet attention. Its bays, along whose winding and peaceful shores, calm contemplation may lingeringly dwell, and rejoice in its retreat from the bustle and throng of conflicting cities vast; its valleys, verdant with luxuriant foliage, lulling the senses with the gentle tricklings of their streamlets; its bowery roads, arched over with the green tracery of intertwining trees: its rock promontories, stretching into Ocean, bidding defiance to its multitudinous waves; its Orchards loaded with the fruitage of the coming Autumn; its quaint old Homesteads, which speak of comfort and of clustered families; its fig trees and vines, and flowers innumerable, the stock indigenous; the myrtle tresselled cottage, and the ancient fortress, the hoary keep frowning away assailants by its strength, and the modern farm cottage, inviting residence from invalid or stranger; its sea views, glorious in their majesty and loveliness, begetting thoughts of the power and agency which spans and connects the globe; the distant sail, the rushing steamer, the busy port which speaks of the hardy enterprize and adventurous industry of the Island habitants; the unaccustomed costume of the sellers in the Market place, and the French patois which on all sides greets the ear, present a panorama at once exciting, instructive, pleasurable, delightful. Heightened is the attractiveness of all that is seen, when accompanied by kind welcome from valued friends, when Christian converse on high and holy themes connected with human improvement, freedom, and happiness, beguiles the walk or ride; when the knowledge that here is planted the seed of Christian reforma-

tion inspires thankfulness for the past and hope for the future. Nor less the soul-felt and soothing, albeit saddened satisfaction, when all are associated with the memory of youthful promise, and spring time hope, and filial affection, finding in that Island its earthly resting place. In the burial ground of the Colomberie, near St. Helier's, where the graceful willow droops its branches to the ground almost, sheltering the rose tree and the shrub, may be seen a headstone which bears the inscription :—

Sacred to the Memory

OF

CHARLES HARRIS,

Son of the Rev. George Harris, and Elizabeth Agnes his Wife, of Newcastle-upon Tyne,
Who died at St. Helier's, February 25, 1848,
Aged 18.

GOD IS LOVE.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.

Close by, is another, to the memory of Captain Edwards, respecting whom a brief Memoir will be inserted in a future number. Peaceful is the scene, and hallowing thought reverts often to that place of sepulture.

To the generous devotedness of Admiral Gifford and his Sister, and no less to the untiring self-sacrificing zeal and meritorious efforts of the Rev. James Taplin, is Jersey indebted for its Unitarian Christian church. It is a neat building, situated in Grove Place, and will accommodate probably three hundred people. On the morning and evening of Sunday, May 26, the religious services were conducted by the Rev. George Harris. The Reformed Liturgy is used in the public worship. About one hundred and thirty persons were present in the morning, and probably in consequence of unfavourable weather in the evening, about one hundred and eight. A few strangers were present. It appeared an error that greater publicity had not been given to the fact, that a minister from England was to preach. It is right that every available means should be employed to excite attention. In this case several persons would have attended the services,

who are not wont to frequent the chapel. The friends who are labouring to build up this Christian church, are deserving of all praise for their efforts. Never will they forget, we hope, that union is strength, that the aid of every like-minded individual is of importance in the work, and that each and all can do something in the furtherance of Christian Reformation, and the diffusion of Gospel freedom, truth, and love, by living its principles, and strengthening the hands of the brethren, and their indefatigable Minister.

Maidstone Chapel; the Lord's Supper.—Sunday, June 2, the Rev. George Harris preached morning and evening, in this place of worship. The attendance was considerable, many strangers of various religious denominations being present, care having been taken to give the public efficient notice. At the request of the Minister, Mr. Harris also conducted the service of the Lord's Supper. If, before he had entertained any doubt as to the erroneousness of the common mode of administering this Ordinance in Unitarian chapels, it would have been dispelled by what he witnessed here. The contrast was most striking between it, and Newcastle. The Congregation as usual was dismissed at the close of the forenoon worship, and though invitation was given to remain, at least to hear and witness the service that was to follow, a solitary individual alone accepted the invitation. The clattering of shoes on gallery stairs, and the bustle of retiring audience, grated harshly on the ear, and painfully wounded the Christian affections. It seemed as if all were hastening from a matter with which they had nought to do, leaving a select coterie to celebrate some hidden mysteries on which eyes profane might not dare to look. Surely this unseemly contravention of the Saviour's departing injunction, should no longer be. Surely it is at least worthy of trial, whether by making the Lord's Supper part and parcel of the forenoon worship, on the days appropriated to its celebration, attention might not be awakened to the real nature and character of the Institution, false dread be removed, superstition be rebuked, mystery be dissipated, and the true objects and purposes of the festival of remembrance be carried out and ensured. Wherever the plan of *quarterly* celebration has been tried, introducing, in the hearing of the whole congregation, at the close of the sermon, this especial remembrance of Christ, these beneficial effects have followed. This practical bringing home to sight and hearing the actual Institution, will be found of more avail than a thousand homilies urging to its secluded and separate observance. Set apart a portion of the centre of the Chapel for Communicants,

invite all who wish to partake, to take their seats there, either at the commencement of the worship, or during the singing of a Hymn after the sermon, ask all the Congregation to remain till the close, and few indeed would be unimpressed with the simplicity and beauty of the affecting Rite, and its perfect adaptation to the wants and feelings of the human heart. And in that feeling, strong religious impressions would be mingled, and virtuous Christian resolve be strengthened, and all would join in contributions to the poorer brethren of the Congregation, and Christian charity and affection cement the worshippers in bonds of brotherhood with each other, and in love to their ascended Lord. Through this agency in Newcastle, the attendants at the Lord's Supper are fourfold in number, compared with those who remained on the old plan of action. At Maidstone, the few who manifested practical obedience to their Lord's request, seemed even fewer, from being scattered about in corners of pews, instead of being gathered together in one place, as if really surrounding the table of the Lord. We trust our brethren every where will seriously consider this matter, and reform this crying evil.

Salford Unitarian Christian Chapel.—The Congregation assembling in this building, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Beard, have ever been zealous in the work of Education. In addition to Day-Schools for Boys and Girls, flourishing Sunday Schools are maintained likewise. In these, upwards of three hundred children are instructed, and in their support sermons were preached by the Rev. George Harris on Sunday morning and evening, June 9. The attendance on both occasions was very numerous, many friends being present from neighbouring towns, some from considerable distances, and among the number a young couple from St. Petersburgh, in whose welfare the Preacher felt a special interest, as having known them from infancy. The audience showed their earnestness in the good work of Education, the collections exceeding Forty pounds.

Obituary.—At Gourock, June 16, of pleurisy, aged 18, Charles Henry, youngest son of the late Mr. James Hedderwick, printer and publisher, Glasgow. Our young friend's death came upon us as a shock, reviving recollections of similar bereavement, and calling out heartfelt sympathy with mourning friends for departed excellence. The just appreciation of that excellence, with the truly Christian reflections with which it is blended, combined with the remarks on the huge sorrow with which other hearts were in that same week weighed down, which appeared in the *Glasgow Citizen* of June 22, a newspaper conducted by the respected Brothers of the deceased, we have a sorrowful pleasure in transferring to our pages. The article is headed—

"LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

It is a discreet and modest practice on the part of Journalists to sink their individuality. The "we-ism" of the press is an abstraction. Day after day, week after week, and year after year, it discourses on an endless variety of themes, with a freshness which recognizes no difference of season, and a longevity which outlasts lifetimes.

While, however, we acknowledge the good taste and wisdom of making the press utter its oracles as from a height above the ills and casualties of humanity, we cannot but remark, at the same time, how often we have felt the position of anomaly and pain in which those who give it thought and language are thus liable to be placed. The head that thinks may ache—the hand that writes may falter—a private sorrow may engross head, hand, and heart—yet all must force themselves into feverish submission to an imperious professional routine.

Nevertheless, we confess ourselves in a mood this week to violate, with whatsoever of delicacy and reserve we can command, the manly and proper rule of subjecting personal and private feelings to the requirements of public duty. When we state that we have this week been renewing our acquaintance with death, gazing on it until we have deemed it not awful but beautiful, recognizing it in features which our memory could trace back through eighteen years to infancy, and transferring to its pulseless realm one whose existence formed, as it were, a portion of our own; whose ready jest, shrewd and apt intelligence, and kindly and persevering industries, were, in very fact, part and parcel of our daily familiar life, there are few, we apprehend, in this Christian world, who will be rash to blame us for making partial revelation of the sorrow which lies heavy at our heart.

Not to ourselves only, however, has the present week brought anguish and sadness. We feel that our columns should this day be put in mourning. Apart from the ordinary deaths from diseases, of which every week makes up its touching record, the appalling catastrophe off Portpatrick has filled many a distracted home with the wailings of agony and despair. That most deplorable, and to us unaccountable error of judgment, which resulted on Tuesday morning, June 18, in the wreck of the *Orion* steamer, will be abundantly canvassed hereafter. In the meantime, the voice of censure is scarcely heard amid the shrieks of bereavement, and the kindly accents of sympathy. The terrible tragedy enacted on the face of the calm waters cannot be undone. We try to investigate the causes and award the blame, but the agonies of the spectacle engross our imagination and unnerve our purpose. We think only of the magnificent floating palace, rent, reeling, and going down into the stifling deep,

with its wild mad throng of human beings, startled from their slumbers, and rushing half-naked, shrieking, and helpless, from comfortable cabins and gilded saloons, to struggle with the invading waters, or snatch at any floating spar which might offer a prospect of escape. We think only of parents finding themselves childless, and of children suddenly orphaned; of whole households extinguished in a moment; of relatives frantic for the loss of relatives; of excruciating hours of suspense, and ghastly revealed certainties; and of all the thousand and one crowding and unspeakable horrors of that colossal disaster, the simple narratives of which, as given in our columns this day, there are few, we apprehend, will be able to read without shuddering and tears.

In the midst of trials like these, whether consisting of the loss of a single friend, after an illness alleviated by all the resources of science, and all the assiduities of affection; or of the wholesale destruction of numbers, occasioned by carelessness or unavoidable accident, it is something to reflect that the tendency of familiarizing our minds with death is to disrobe it of its terrors, and to clothe it with beauty and holiness. It is the healer of wounds, the last best physician, the terminator of mortal anxieties and agonies, the bestower of a sleep which makes up for nights or months of sleeplessness, the creator of a calm so sweet, gentle, and perfect, as to contrast strangely with the convulsive grief of the survivors. And what, after all, is the difference between the shortest and the longest life, between dropping down now, and a little later in the march of time, to him who has stood at the grave's mouth, and looked sheer into the eternities, until ages have appeared as moments, worlds as atoms, and earthly grandeurs and ambitions as absolute nothingness and vanity? Mourners have need of tears, but nevertheless, in the eye of philosophy and religion the sternest dispensations of God's providence are benignand merciful. It is by the bed of sickness, or amidst the wrecking waters, or in some similar situation of watchfulness or peril, that hearts are tested, and humanity displays its heroisms. When all is gone, the lapsing health that was nursed, or the languishing hope that was cherished, and death settles in familiar features with a peacefulness which neither earthquakes nor thunder may evermore disturb; what are the memories on which it is soothing and delightful to dwell? Riches, station, and worldliness in all its forms, vanish, in such moments, as the breaths and bubbles of an hour; and that which alone endears remembrance, and teaches the voice of lamentation to lose itself among the celestial harmonies, is the gentleness, the goodness, the genuine religion of the heart, which, while it aggravates the consciousness of loss, soothes the anguish of bereavement, and through indications of a divine origin, and presages of an immortal destiny, assures us of its alliance with God."

North of England Unitarian Christian Association.—The Fifth Anniversary was held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Sunday, June 30, and Monday, July 1. Friends were present on one or both of the days from Alnwick, Chirton, North Shields, South Shields, Stockton-on-Tees, York, Malton, Sunderland, Felling, Wreckington, &c., &c. The weather was favourable, but the season unfavourable to so large an attendance as could have been wished, very many Families being out of Town. On Sunday morning, the introductory religious services in the Unitarian Chapel, Hanover Square, were conducted by the Rev. Edward Tagart, F.S.A., F.G.S., Minister of Little Portland Street Chapel, London, and Honorary Secretary to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. His sermon, which comprised a clear, impressive, and scriptural exposition of the principles of Unitarian Christianity, was founded on 1 Corinth. viii., 6, 7. It was listened to with the most enchained attention by the audience. Its powerful delineations of scriptural truth, the moral and spiritual beauty with which the tendencies and spirit of the faith in Christ, were characterized and brought out, could not fail to fill, with reverence to God and love to humanity, the minds and hearts of the hearers. At the close of the discourse a collection was made in aid of the Association. The Report of the Committee for the past year was then read by the Secretary, the Rev. George Harris; and the Lord's Prayer, with Benediction, closed the service.

The introduction of the Report in the course of the forenoon worship gave general satisfaction. It was felt to be a better plan than holding a separate meeting for its reception; it enabled all to hear its contents, whilst being in practical harmony with the discourse of the Preacher, it seemed to be the carrying out into actual life the principles he had been enunciating and enforcing. Embracing, as it does, many particulars respecting the commencement of plans which may prove most important and beneficial, and lead to similar efforts in other portions of the Kingdom, it is presented in this record of the proceedings of the Anniversary.

REPORT.

"'The times of Reformation' necessitate duties and labours,

instrumentalities and agencies, of various character and purpose. Not by one stereotyped mode of action, only, can the varied moral and religions wants of the community be adequately met. The living voice may awaken and satisfy some, reading and meditation others, whilst each and all, tract and Missionary, public lecture and private conversation, open air meeting and family visitation, may be usefully employed in exciting Scriptural inquiry, maturing thought, and settling religious conviction. In heralding the progress of Gospel simplicity and purity, and combining the isolated efforts of individuals, anxious that the Word of the Lord should have free course, and be glorified in the enlightenment and salvation of mankind; in the exposure of error, and the dissemination of the truth of God, there will be, as in the natural world, alternate sunshine and cloud, barrenness and fertility, cheering or depressing hours; moments of trial and conflict, when Christian faith is tested, adherence to the right, religious conscientiousness, approved; and also times of refreshing from the Spirit of the Lord, when prejudices are seen to be loosening, and the hitherto enchained, come forth, the freedmen of Christ Jesus. Yet at all times, and amidst every varying circumstance, is Christian obligation to be fulfilled; and whether prosperity smile on Christian endeavour, or difficulties hedge up, for a season, the pathway of duty, to persevere and faint not, assured that the counsel of God shall stand, and all his pleasure be accomplished.

Amongst the bright and cheering hours, animating to the mind and heart of the Christian labourer, are those, which, on every recurring Anniversary of an Association, such as this which we are assembled to support, bring together usually far off separated friends, to commune of principles and hopes, consolations and privileges, unspeakably precious to their souls; enabling all to listen to the pleadings of Advocates of the same household of faith, whose words of truth and soberness, of moral and spiritual earnestness, it might not otherwise have been their happiness to hear; which compels contrast between past condition and present attainment, actual results, with anticipated progress; and which, asking and yielding account of bypast effort, thanks God and takes courage in the companionship and countenance of likeminded disciples of the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

With cordial and Christian greeting to their friends and brethren in the brotherhood of the Gospel, the Committee of the Association gladly offer to consideration their Fifth Annual Report.

In the enjoyment of the present Anniversary, the Committee feel it would be unjust to forget the sacred pleasures of the last, or to omit the renewed expression of their obligations to the respected Christian Brother, who then so powerfully delineated the position and duties of the denomination with which he had been led to cast in his lot, through Scriptural investigation, and the contrast of former bondhood with its religious freedom. Not vainly uttered, they trust, were those vivid words, which characterized the Christ, as the moral and spiritual image of God:

and pointed the duties, and the dangers also, of those whom the Truth made free. '*The time of Harvest*,' to the Christian Reformer, they have seen to be at hand; nor have they been negligent of providing the means which should enable willing labourers to put forth the sickle and reap its blessed fruits. In conjunction with the Committee of the Yorkshire West Riding Tract Society, who had requested the publication of the Rev. John Gordon's sermon, the Committee of this Association subscribed for 250 copies.

Considering the vital importance to the due appreciation of Christian truth, and the real nature and character of the Bible, of just ideas of the authenticity and authority of the various books of which it is composed: how irrational and superstitious the view which many entertain; and how equally untenable and erroneous the antagonism which its misjudging friends have excited, the Committee gladly encouraged the publication of "*A Popular Introduction to the Bible*," by the Rev. John Wright, of Macclesfield, by subscribing for 200 copies, with the design of presenting a copy of the work to each subscriber to the Tract and Missionary Society. In the course of the year they have reprinted the Farewell Address to the Parishioners of Catterick, by the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, an admirable tract, which should be in the hands of all who value Christian integrity and high mindedness of aim: 2,000 copies were printed. They also requested for publication the religious Services at the Catterick Commemoration, and 1,000 copies were issued. They have received from the Glasgow Tract Society, 100 copies of Rev. C. Clarke's sermon, in friendly acknowledgement of a donation of books from this Society to theirs; from their respected friend and fellow-labourer, Mr. William Davison, of Alnwick, 100 copies of Stetson's valuable practical tract "Piety at Home;" from the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 891 tracts, by various authors, well calculated to further the cause of Christian truth and righteousness. These, with the publication of 300 copies of the Fourth Annual Report and Catalogue of Books, and the purchase of 233 publications to meet the claims of Subscribers, added to the Stock in hand June 17, 1849, consisting of 3,411 copies of various tracts, by different authors belonging to the Unitarian denomination, make altogether 8,475 in the course of the year.

Of these, 250 copies of the Report and Catalogue have been distributed; 600 of Lindsey's Address left from door to door, and given away in Catterick, and its neighbourhood; exchanged with the Yorkshire West Riding Tract Society, 222; claimed by Subscribers, 263; distributed after lectures at Alnwick, 127; at Sunderland, 250, and 130; at Darlington, Haydon Bridge, and other places in Northumberland, Durham, and Cumberland, 296; sold 276; Mr. Wright's book to Subscribers, 175; by Secretary to various individuals, 118; total sent out, 2,707; which, deducted from 8,475, leaves as the present Stock, 5,768, value, £36 1s. 0d.

In the Report, presented at the last Anniversary, it was suggested, that, in connection with the Missionary plans, the

'transference of the Quarterly Meetings to other portions of the District, contemplated in the sphere of the Society's operations, would seem desirable. By holding them in different places, points of union might be formed, from which useful influences might radiate to surrounding spots, and conjoint efforts be thereby matured, and carried out more readily than by their repetition, with the celebration of the Anniversary at one Town only.' Acting on this suggestion, the Committee, with the ready concurrence of the Christian Brethren at Barnard Castle, Durham, appointed the August Quarterly Meeting to be held at that Town, and by adjournment, at Catterick, in Yorkshire, on Tuesday, August 28, in commemoration of the venerable THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, who resigned his Living, the Vicarage of that place in 1773, in consequence of his conscientious conviction, that the worship of the Established Church, of which he had for many years been a Clergyman, was unscriptural; and the worship of the FATHER, in spirit and in truth, in the name of Christ Jesus, was alone Scriptural and true; and in remembrance also, that by him, in that place, the blessed instrumentality of Sunday School instruction had origin. On both occasions, the sermons were preached by the Secretary of the Association, assisted at Catterick, in the devotional services, by his venerable predecessor here, the Rev. William Turner. Happy, morally and spiritually profitable, were both meetings. That at Catterick, was specially animating, and spirit stirring; hallowing thought, spirit, and action, prompting Christian resolve, and nerving Christian deed. Associated will it be, in all time coming, in the recollections of those who were participants in its pleasures, with their purest imaginings. Privileged the Committee felt in being instrumental in calling up, midst fashionable conformity to acknowledged error, and abandonment of individual judgment to priestly authority and dictation, the memory of the righteous dead, the Christian Confessor, who sacrificed worldly emolument to conscience, and obeyed God rather than man.

The Quarterly meeting, December 2 and 3, was held at Sunderland. The Committee, desirous of uniting in Christian purpose and action all entertaining similar religious convictions with themselves, invited their respected friend, Mr. George Close, of West Witton, Wensleydale, to be the Preacher. He, with others, devotes his Sundays to the spread of the glad tidings of the Gospel, in the villages of the localities neighbouring on his dwelling place. Mr. Close complied with the request, and preached, in powerful and beautiful illustration, and advocacy of the principles of Christian love and holiness. On the Monday, at a social meeting, attended by the Secretary, and several friends from Newcastle and other places, the plans of the Association were considered, and met with warm approval.

The February Quarterly meeting was held in Newcastle, in conjunction with the Christian Fellowship fortnightly gathering; and that of May, in Sunderland, on Whit-Sunday, the anniversary of the opening of the Unitarian Chapel in that Town; and the commencement of an auspicious movement, the particulars

of which will be detailed in the subsequent portions of the Report. The next meeting is proposed to be held at Alnwick, in the month of August, and will, no doubt, as in the other instances, manifest the desirableness of continuing this plan of action. The alteration, the utility of which has thus been proved, will necessitate an alteration in the Seventh Rule of the Association, in which all its members will readily acquiesce; whilst the enlarged plan and sphere of the Society's operations seem to require a verbal omission and alteration in the Fourth Rule, in respect of the title of the Association, which will make it more descriptive of its nature and purpose.

It will be in the recollection of the Members and friends of the Association, that Missionary labours have been engaged in, as widely as possible in former years, by the Secretary of the Association, and the Rev. M. C. Frankland of Malton; the wide field of Christian usefulness presented by the District, comprehended in the Northern Counties, ascertained and surveyed, as well as the desire of the people, in various localities, that it should be cultivated. Each successive yearly Report has pointed out the necessity existing for such labour, and the last presented dwelt more forcibly than any on the wants of the age and country, stating 'there is a yearning for truth and freedom, for vital and practical Religion in many hearts, which know not where to seek their light, and peace, and consolation. The duty of upholding the truth in Christ Jesus, is imperative on the Christian Unitarian. There might be a Mission Circuit in connection with each Congregation, in which the Minister and Lay Brethren might co-operate most effectively; there might be a Missionary District, combining all these into active and effectual union for good.' A unanimous Resolution of the last Annual Meeting affirmed:—

'That this Meeting, believing Missionary labours to be of essential importance in the diffusion of Christian truth, freedom, benevolence, and righteousness, highly approve of those portions of the Report of the Committee, having reference to Missionary operations; and commend to the Committee, now appointed, the vigorous prosecution of this object of the Society, in the various Districts connected with it.'

At their first meeting in July, the Committee proceeded in the matter; a Missionary plan and circuit were sketched, a circular addressed to the Congregations and friends in each locality, detailing the contemplated mode of action; asking the statement of their wishes, as to the employment of the Missionary in each district of the Society's sphere of labour; and giving an outline of the qualifications, moral and religious, which the Committee deemed essential to a competent Missionary. At the same time inquiries were instituted as to where such individual could be found, and willing, as well as able, for the onerous task.

Protracted and multifarious correspondence ensued, and much anxious consideration was given to the subject. It was felt to be a Christian enterprize of grave weight, and involving important interests, and lasting consequences. Error in choice

or inefficiency in the Agent, might prove fatal to a purpose, in itself valuable and righteous. A memorial was addressed to the Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, comprehending full details of the projected plans, and pointing out the means of their accomplishment, if happily forthcoming. The replies were favourable. Many subscriptions, in aid of the Mission, were proffered from various quarters, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, not the least; and the way seemed tolerably clear to the realization of an adequate income, to warrant trial of the experiment.

Laborious as were these preliminary steps, they were easy compared with the obtainment of the suitable individual for the work. Inquiries were made in all likely quarters, and, at length, success apparently crowned those inquiries. A respected, meritorious, and conscientious Individual, whose love of Divine Truth had mastered educational prejudice, and snapped asunder Ecclesiastical fetters, and avowed the results of Scriptural inquiry, in the midst of hostile influences, and denominational temptations, was invited to undertake the arduous labour. The invitation, after considerable delay and doubt, was accepted, and all needful arrangements entered into, and preparation made for the commencement of his labours on the fifth of May. Correspondingly grievous was the disappointment which followed, when it was communicated, at almost the eleventh hour, that illness prevented the fulfilment of promised engagement, and that it must be wholly abandoned. There was sympathy, of course, with the individual suffering; and sorrow that promise of usefulness should be blighted; but no relinquishment of hope. Increased difficulties should always generate multiplied efforts. They did so here. The whole work of correspondence had to be gone over afresh; and, for a season, disappointment followed on disappointment; at one time seemingly shutting out all likelihood of proceeding in the work. Yet how short seeing is humanity, and how fixed should be human faith in that overruling Providence, who ever raises up the right instruments for effecting his own wise and beneficent plan for the moral and spiritual education of his children; and when the hour is come, prepares the Man to strike its note of warning and instruction, of knowledge, truth, and love. At the very time such an Individual was at hand. Educated in the bosom of a Calvinistic land, at one of her Universities, and in connection with her Established Church, he had worked his way, by Scriptural inquiry, to the conviction that God is love, that God is One. Testimonials to character, talents, moral earnestness were given, and all highly satisfactory. Conscientiousness had marked his career, ministerial usefulness had accompanied his efforts, devoted to the moral uplifting of the Masses had been his young life; and the like spirit and aim he brought into his changed convictions, as to the nature of the truths and tidings, purport and object of the Gospel of Christ. Unanimously was he chosen, the Committee embodying their sentiments and wishes in the following Resolution:—

'That this Committee express their respect and sympathy

for the spirit of Christian earnestness, and love of truth, by which the Rev. Ebenezer Syme has been actuated in his Religious investigations, as well as their admiration of his conscientious adherence to, and open profession of what he has from time to time deemed to be Christian principle and practice. They rejoice that he has been led to the adoption of principles they esteem coincident with the Faith in Christ Jesus, and welcome him as a Coadjutor in the holy work of Christian Reformation. And, believing him to be imbued with the Missionary spirit, and devoted to the enlightenment and redemption of the Masses from Error and Sin, they respectfully invite him to become the Missionary of the North of England Unitarian Christian Association, assuring him of their cordial co-operation in the duties which it comprehends and involves."

Within a fortnight of the day the first elected Missionary should have entered on his labours, Mr. Syme's inauguration services were conducted at Sunderland, the Secretary delivering the charge to the people and the Missionary; and he preaching an address full of Christian earnestness, and truth, and benevolence. Heartily do the Committee congratulate themselves on the completion of their labours, in the obtainment of a Christian Brother, who, they are persuaded, will prove himself a workman who needeth not to be ashamed: and heartily do they congratulate the Churches and individuals associated with them in Christian effort, on the promising commencement which has been made of the Missionary enterprize.

Mr. Syme's Missionary Circuit is designed to embrace in the Month, religious services at Sunderland and North Shields, two Sundays; Whitby, one Sunday; Barnard Castle, one Sunday; and on a fifth Sunday occurring in the month, Alnwick; with occasional week-day services at Malton, Wellburn, Barton, Darlington, Stockton, Middlesborough, Evenwood, Shildon, and the Dales, it is hoped; or wherever openings and opportunities for Christian usefulness may arise. The field is confessedly too wide for one man's occupancy, but he will find coadjutors, it is anticipated, bye and bye; and his efforts may stimulate and encourage others to action more immediately. Christian sympathy they cannot but awaken in all right-minded people, in every one, anxious that man should be improved, and God truly reverenced.

From the Missionary's Report portions will now be read. It is addressed to Mr. Harris:—

'My Dear Sir,

At your request, I give you a brief account of my labours. Being only in the Sixth week of my Apostolate, my Report is necessarily more prospective than retrospective, a prophecy rather than a history.

My expectations have been more than realized, though perhaps those expectations were too low. But it was impossible for me to entertain any higher. * * * * * * Had I not been accustomed to "uphill work" I should not have undertaken it. There are three departments of Missionary labour, any one of which is quite sufficient for one man. To me was assigned

all three departments, and all under adverse circumstances. In the first place, I was to be a Circuit Preacher, supplying vacant pulpits from Alnwick to Whitby. * * * * * * In the second place, I was to endeavour to raise a cause at Sunderland; and, in the third place, I was to act as a Minister at large, and break up new ground. The last department is the proper work of a Missionary. * * * * * * I was afraid that I might "supply pulpits" for Forty years in this occasional way, without producing any results. Each department interfered with the success of the other. In proportion as one was attended to, well, the others must be neglected. Time, toil, and patience seemed more than usually necessary. But your own zeal, and the sober expectations of the friends of the Mission, I say this to their praise, not to their blame, encouraged me. I considered myself as in many respects adapted to the work, and therefore under obligation to give it a fair trial. * * * * * * Moreover, I was not afraid of work, I had strong popular sympathies, felt more at home preaching by the way side to poor outcasts, than in a mahogany pulpit, and, having preserved my early habits of simplicity, as regards my mode of life, I had hardihood and humility perfectly sufficient for the toils and privations of such a work. With this conviction I have entered upon it.

I have visited once, all the Stations marked in the Plan, and have in every case had occasion to be satisfied with my visit. I have preached in the open air every Sunday, and at all the Stations. My audiences on such occasions have averaged about 200. Invariably, a number who had heard me on the Street, made their appearance at the subsequent meeting in the Chapel. At Whitby I held the open air meeting immediately before the Evening service, and at the close invited them into the Chapel. The result was, that I preached to above one hundred intelligent and respectable people, who followed me, after a few minutes of an interval, into the small but comfortable Chapel, while but for this, I am certain that the temptations for a walk on that lovely Evening, would not have left me twenty hearers.

At Darlington, last Tuesday, June 25, I had first a meeting at the Cross, and immediately after held a Religious service, and preached in the Central Hall, having an audience of upwards of a hundred, on both occasions.

At Barnard Castle, last Sunday Evening, June 23, the little Chapel belonging to the Christian Brethren was filled. There, and at every place I have been, there is every prospect of gathering good congregations, if there were labourers to gather them. I think that this matter has been pretty fairly tested. At all the places I was a perfect stranger; my name therefore could draw none; no doctrinal discussions were agitating the public mind; every influence of this kind that lingered in these districts being adverse, rather than favourable, I have published no exciting bills, and my subjects of discourse have been of a plain and unexciting character, and yet, on every occasion, whether on Sundays, or on other days of the week, I have had better audiences than I ever had as an Orthodox Minister,

preaching under similar circumstances. Can this be due to any thing save the preparedness, yea, anxiety of the public mind to hear our principles? Are not the fields white unto the harvest? Is there not encouragement to go on? * * * * * *

I hope that attention will be paid to the formation of district auxiliaries. I think that the friends in the different localities are alive to the necessity of this. Some have expressed themselves to this effect. Nothing circumscribes our effort but the want of funds. I hope that bye and bye, we shall have no occasion to say so. Yours Sincerely,

June 27, 1850. EBENEZER SYME.'

Whilst engaged in prosecuting preliminary measures for permanent Missionary engagement, the Committee were not neglectful of localities in which Missionary labour was desirable and possible. Since the last Anniversary, Mr. Harris has preached at Barnard Castle, Catterick, Sunderland, and Alnwick, giving, in the two last named places, courses of week-evening fortnightly lectures, during several months; attended by considerable numbers of people, and opening the way, it is hoped, to after efforts. The Rev. M. C. Frankland has aided at Newcastle and Sunderland, and held extra meetings also at Wellburn and Malton, the places of his stated ministry; and preached several times at Barton and Oxclose.

The usual annual subscription of £5 has been transmitted to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association; and your Secretary attended, at the request of your Committee, as Deputy from this Society, the Annual Meeting in London, in Whitsun week. On that occasion he was requested to move the following Resolution at the business meeting:—

'That this Meeting rejoices to find the efforts made in the North of England, to diffuse the knowledge and influence of pure Christianity, by means of Missionary operations; and would particularly call upon the Committee to watch the result of such operations, to help in promoting their efficiency, and to see whether they can be extended with advantage.'

It was seconded by the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter, of Nottingham, and unanimously approved. On that occasion, as also in every communication with the Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the Committee have pleasure in bearing testimony to the Christian courtesy and interest with which their suggestions and wishes have been received and responded to by its members. With great satisfaction they hail the presence amongst them this day of the Honorary Secretary of the Association, whose efficient and untiring services have so mainly contributed to extend and secure its usefulness and value.

The Committee are happy in acknowledging the very efficient and generous support their plans have called forth; upwards of eighty new subscribers, or increased subscriptions, having been, in the course of the year, added to the Association. Whilst thankful for this aid, and appreciating the promptness with which it was given, they have to impress on the minds

of all who desire the permanent establishment and extension of the Mission, that increased and persevering help will be needful; and this help they feel persuaded will be forthcoming. The importance of the work warrants that persuasion, and they know from past experience, that it is well founded. That work they commend to the earnest, zealous, combined endeavours of its friends, and to the blessing of Almighty God. It is called for by the wants of the time and country. It is through its agency that ignorance is to be enlightened; knowledge of Gospel truth spread abroad, enthroned in the mind, hallowing the soul, and its divine morality adorning the life. Conservators of the blessed revealings of Infinite Wisdom and Love to the children of men, through Christ Jesus the Saviour, alike from the Unbelief which would assail and scoff, the Superstition which corrupts, the bigotry which anathematizes, and the priestly authority which dogmatizes and enslaves, may the members of this Association render it the herald of salvation to the cottage and the Christian home, enlightening and blessing their inmates, and making the agency of family affection, hallowed and sanctified by the truth of Christ Jesus, the prelude and preparation to the purity and bliss of Heaven."

In the evening of Sunday, June 30, the Rev. E. Tagart conducted the whole service, preaching a very lucid and doctrinally practical discourse, on Human Nature, its tendencies and character, duties and destiny, from Genesis iii. 22. Collections, £12. 5s. 2½d. Not transient will the effect of the services of this day prove.

On Monday afternoon, July 1, the Members and friends of the Association assembled at Tea, in the Victoria Hall, Grey Street. About two hundred and fifty persons, male and female, were present. Flowers and evergreens, with branches of trees, and geraniums, had been contributed by various members of the Congregation, and tastefully arranged on the walls, or in vases on the tables, gave a pleasing and refreshing interest to the animated scene. Twenty members of the Congregation, who acted as Stewards, sedulously devoted themselves to promote the comfort and enjoyment of the assembly. On the motion of Mr. Robert Wallace, the Rev. George Harris was called to the chair, and the Rev. H. V. Palmer of York, appointed Vice President. Before tea, prayer was offered by the President, and after tea, a Hymn of thanksgiving was sung by the company.

The Chairman addressed the meeting to the following effect:—I feel great pleasure in meeting you on the present occasion. I have always liked these social gatherings. There is a frankness and cordiality about them, which, to my mind,

is ever exhilarating and refreshing. The cold formalities of mere conventional intercourse, melt away before the warmth of Christian companionship and affection, and we seem to realize, for a season, at least, that we form, however wide may be earthly distinctions, but one common brotherhood, that we are really one family. And so Christianity represents us; and one reason why we rejoice in its glad tidings of good, is, that it does thus characterize humanity. Yes! we have all One Father, and One God has created us. We have all One Master, Jesus the Christ, and all we are brethren. We have all one law, one rule of action, the Will of our Maker, as made known in the commandments, the example, the spirit, the life of Christ. We have all one object, the attainment of Heaven, its purity and bliss unspeakable. Fellow-travellers are we to the mansions of our Father's house; how natural that we should meet together to commune of common principles, hopes, duties, destiny; to encourage and stimulate Christian endeavour; to heave out of the way the hindrances to Christian perfection; to help our brother, struggling with temptation, conflicting with Sin; and whilst comforting the sorrowful with the precious words of consolation which the Gospel utters, and feeling the holy and sustaining power of Resurrection midst the direst scenes of earthly affliction, ever to cultivate the habit of acquiescence in the Providence of the Infinite One, as at all times wise, and merciful, and good; and to resolve, in His strength, to hold on our way "rejoicing in hope, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Principles such as these, enlightened, reasonable, morally elevating to mind and heart; hopes thus pure, benignant, holy; objects thus spiritual and hallowing; duties thus clearly defined and obligatory, should seem incapable of antagonism, of gainsaying, of ridicule and scoffing. Yet is it ever the best things which are most liable to be abused, and with the purest will corruption mingle, and bigotry will tarnish charity, and Mystery mystify the clear, and "Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread." The history of the world unfortunately demonstrates this in innumerable instances, and the Religion of love, of power, and of a sound mind, has proved no exception to the rule of wrong. Rather is it in this, the highest interest of man, that wrong has revelled, bedecking itself in gorgeous panoply, to allure, deceive, oppress, and enslave. And because of this perversion of the good, the beautiful, the true, the benevolent, the holy, the simplicity of godliness, simplicity which is ever the twin-born of perfection, has been denounced as polluting and mere man feigned fable; and that which is really of God, and for good to man, has been stigmatized as the very incarnation of every evil under the sun.

Equally opposed to both these extremes is our position in the religious world, and hence, consequently, the moral necessity which constrains the institution of such Societies as that, the anniversary of which has now assembled us together. As Christian men we feel bound to oppose the erroneous and

maintain the true. Our reverence of God, our fealty to Christ, our love to man, claim this service at our hands. The performance of this service is perfectly consistent with respect for conscientious individual conviction, and friendliness of feeling towards the upright and God-fearing of every name and every denomination. With the persons of men we have no quarrel; but with their errors we hold no truce. With no unfriendly feeling to individuals composing any Christian denomination, or to any human being, whatever be his opinions, are we associated together, but from a desire to show each and all, as we believe, a more excellent way; to show them those truths which would lead them to the footstool of the Father, and teach them holy reverence and obedience to his commandments, and that man's highest duty is to love Him, with all the heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. Unitarians are we, and glorying in the title, because to our minds it is descriptive of the faith which the Saviour instructed his disciples to entertain in relation to the One and only living God, and the worship which he commanded us to offer in spirit and truth to the Universal Father. Christians are we, because convinced of the truth and divinity of the mission of Jesus from the Father of light and love, and therefore look to him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, speaking as one having authority from on high, and filled with the wisdom and benevolence of God. Proselytists are we, because to our minds there are such things in the world as truth and falsehood, right and wrong, slavery and liberty, priestcraft and brotherhood; the one, the drag-chain, the blight, and the curse of humanity; the other, the glad emancipation with which the Son of God makes free, giving to his practical disciples freedom from error, ignorance, prejudice, superstition, and sin, the glorious liberty of the children of the Highest. Mourn we do over the bondage of the soul, the blackness of the darkness of those who are without knowledge, the misery, the pollution of Sin-chained outcasts from godliness and purity; and our hearts yearn for the removal of the barriers which impede their exodus from the slavehood of iniquity, and know right well do we that that exodus cannot be effected by mere feelings or expressions of sorrow, unaccompanied by deeds which shall open the prison doors and set the captives free.

Yes! we have our Principles, and we love and prize them. Scriptural teachings we believe them to be, and obey must we what we believe to be the commands, and follow must we what we hold to be the example of Christ. Manifest also must we what we believe to be the spirit of Christ, assured as we are in Holy Writ that unless we have the spirit of Christ we are none of his. Christ would not have been sent and sanctified of God to proclaim these principles to the world, had they not been worthy of all acceptation. Conceal them we dare not. Preach the Gospel to every creature is Christian commandment, and it is Christian privilege too.

In the highways and byeways of the land, at market cross or in secluded Meeting House, through the press and from the pulpit, by public lectures and private conversation, in cottage homes and comfortless hovels, should the words of Christian verity, hope, consolation, freedom, righteousness be proclaimed, stirring up thought, awakening sluggishness, warning from sin, nurturing virtuous resolve, strengthening holy deed, building up in human hearts the Temples of the Lord.

To us, and such as we, is this commission given, and woe be to us if we preach not this Gospel of the kingdom of truth, holiness, peace, and love. It was for these purposes this Association was formed, and so long as we keep these purposes in view, we deem it worthy the support of every true friend of human happiness and human salvation. More and more, if possible, am I confirmed in the long cherished conviction, which years ago I entertained and uttered, that Unitarian Christianity is the only Religion which is capable of redeeming the Masses from ignorance, irreligion, superstition, and Sin. Its sympathies are of and with the people; its principles commend themselves to their reason; its holy and enlightened freedom is what the world is longing for, but knows not where to seek. The struggle and the strife of opinion which are now waging fierce conflict, call for the instruction which such as you alone can give, and the agencies you only can send forth to guide and to reclaim. Amidst the immoral literature, the garbage and the horrors which seize on the imagination of the uninformed, provide you the publications which shall sanctify the affections whilst they enlighten the understanding. On yours and on kindred efforts of likeminded adherents to the Christianity of Christ, is it mainly dependent, under the Providence of God, whether the people shall adhere to Christianity in any shape. Heed not the false and impious asseverations, traitorous alike to history and fact, that God has never yet spoken to man, and never will, by showing in your deeds of enlightened benevolence that He has spoken to your souls in words of power, impelling you to instruct, and bless, and save your brother. Denounced may Unitarianism be, as at Whitby it lately has been, as the "miry places of the world, and the marishes thereof, which shall not be healed, they shall be given to salt," and no freshness or verdure beautify its dwellings, but prove you that its waters are those of the Sanctuary, like Siloa's brook of old, flowing fast by the Oracles of God. Live and love your principles, and agencies of good will they prove to you, and through you to the world around you. In the belief that they are mighty through God to the pulling down the strongholds of error, bigotry, and crime, the furtherance of all that can elevate, dignify, and bless, and save humanity; and that union gives vigour to their advocacy, and encouragement to their working, and that in that advocacy this Association has been useful, and may be rendered increasingly beneficial, I pro-

pose, "The North of England Unitarian Christian Association; may it prove an increasingly efficient agency, in upholding and diffusing Christian truth, freedom, and righteousness."

The CHAIRMAN then read the Financial Report of the Association for the past year. Including balance from preceding year of £13. 2s. 3½d.; the income amounted to £93. 13s. 1d.; the expenditure to £96. 13s. 6d.; leaving balance against the Association of £3. 0s. 5d.

Mr. STOTT, of Alnwick, moved "That the Report of the Committee for the past year, with the Treasurer's accounts, be received and adopted, and, together with a list of subscribers, be printed and circulated." He vindicated the importance of Unitarian doctrine, and contrasted it with the popular theology, contending that the latter cramped and fettered the human intellect, while the former was favourable to free inquiry, and the right of private judgment.

Captain WEATHERLEY seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

The Rev. M. C. FRANKLAND, of Malton and Wellburn, moved, "That this Association tender their respectful sympathy and cordial greeting to their friend and brother, the Rev. Ebenezer Syme; they welcome him to the arduous and important duties he has undertaken to discharge; they assure him of their willing co-operation in his labours, their hope for his Christian usefulness, and it is their heart's desire and prayer, that the blessing of the Father of light and love may accompany and speed his Mission, in unfolding to the people the glad tidings of the pure and undefiled Gospel of Christ Jesus, the Lord." He said, the Chairman had told them that the world stood in need of their earnest efforts in the way of diffusing their principles wherever they could do so. They were commanded by the highest authority, "Freely ye have received, freely give!" and when they reviewed their principles, and considered the state of the world, and what was wanted by human beings in ordinary circumstances, they must acknowledge that their principles were wanted by mankind at large. They must feel that those principles were powerful to deliver the human mind from error. What were their principles as bearing upon this matter? They felt it was their right, and duty, and privilege, to gather instruction from all those teachers which God in his mercy and wisdom had provided for them; that it was their duty and privilege to look around on nature, and gather from it those lessons respecting the being and attributes of their Creator, which, with ten thousand tongues, nature was ever proclaiming; also, with their utmost power, to search into the meaning of the Scriptures, and endeavour to gather that guidance, instruction, and consolation, which they were well calculated to convey. He did not say that these principles would deliver them from all error; but he was satisfied that their ten-

dency, when acted upon, was to save them from many errors. They were also powerful to cleanse the conscience from sin. Their principles were, that God the Creator was to be regarded also as the Father of all mankind. He sought true and sincere worshippers. He desired that all should come to him as children to a Parent. He had sent One to seek and to save them that were lost. He desired that none should perish, but that all should have everlasting life. He did not say that these principles would save every soul from every sin, but there was power in them to prompt, encourage, and incite them to purify themselves from the dominion of every evil habit, and inspire those principles of piety and integrity of which they had a bright example in Christ. Their principles were powerful to console in sorrow; for what was life but a scene of probation? All had their difficulties and troubles, but they were taught that there was a good and wise Being governing all things. They were here but for a time, and whilst here they knew "but in part," but hereafter they would know "even as also they were known." Their principles were powerful to raise the masses of mankind in knowledge. God had given us powers to be used, not to be neglected. We were not merely animals, but capable of acquiring some degree of moral excellence. These being their principles, then came the question, ought they not to do something for their diffusion? It was their duty to do so, if they believed these principles to be true. Let me bring before your recollection a scene which has no doubt often been present to your mind's eye, when reading of that country which the past generations have agreed to call the Holy Land. At one time, it was no uncommon event for a Preacher there to gather together a multitude of his countrymen; and as he gazed on the assembly he well knew that in it there were men from every one of those classes into which he has divided his hearers. There were careless, inattentive hearers, on whose minds the seed of the Word might fall, but it would there produce no more fruit than seed scattered by the wayside, trodden by the feet of many passengers. There were some timid, time-serving men, who might hear the preacher's word; but in their hearts it would produce no more fruit than might be expected from seed sown in stony ground. There were some devoted to the pleasures and wealth of this world, who might hear the preacher's word; but in them it would produce no better result than might be looked for from seed sown among thorns; and there were also some willing to hear and anxious to do their duty, and the word of truth addressed to them would be like seed sown on good ground, bringing forth, here thirty, here sixty, here an hundredfold; and when he looked on that mixed multitude the preacher did not say, "We must give up this mission, we must wait for more favourable times;" his language was "The harvest,

truly, is plenteous, the labourers are few ; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the Harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." My friends, you will observe that those who were asked to pray for more labourers were the very men who afterwards felt themselves called to labour ; and so, I have no doubt, it would be among us, if in our several localities, we could find five, ten, or twenty who would now and then meet together, to pray for a blessing on these labours, and that God would further the great cause of the diffusion of religious truth. We should find that here and there would be one, or two, or more, who would recognize in his own circumstances, the wants of those around him, and the talents with which he is endowed, a clear and positive summons to enter into the harvest.

The Rev. J. McDowell, of Stockton-on-Tees, in seconding the Resolution, invited Mr. Syme to visit the scene of his labours. He was grateful to their Chairman, for the establishment of such a Society as this, which was the means of bringing together, once a year, friends who seldom met; and which had also been the means of appointing Mr. Syme. There were two principles at work in the theological world : one was the high principle which said "You shall not examine the Scriptures for yourselves." This principle, which was represented by the Bishop of Exeter, would even trample on the law of the land, and coerce both laymen and clergymen. The other principle, or rather no principle, if that did not seem a paradox, was that which obtained among the working classes, from reading certain publications of an infidel character. He hoped the mission of Mr. Syme would be beneficial in assisting to stem the tide of irreligion on the one hand, and bring the professedly religious world back to rationa Christianity.

The Chairman observed, that this Institution was established under a different title in the year 1813, and was the first fruits, in the North of England, of the Christian gratitude of the Unitarian body, to the Father of Mercies, for their newly acquired liberty. In July, 1813, the law was repealed, which annexed, in England, three years imprisonment and other penalties, to a denial of the doctrine of the Trinity ; and which, in Scotland, annexed to such denial the penalty of death. In September of that year, the Rev. William Turner, aided by the Rev. John Campbell, who afterwards emigrated to America, established this Society. It continued a Tract Society till the time of his (the Chairman's) coming here, when he endeavoured to enlarge its sphere, and engraft upon it Missionary labours. They had not, till the present time, been enabled to carry out fully the latter great purpose, but they had now, he trusted, been able to see their way clearly to do so. They had already witnessed the deep spirit of Christian earnestness and love of truth which Mr. Syme had manifested, and in their name he gave their friend the right hand of Christian fellowship and brotherhood.

The Resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Mr. Syme said :—It is rather a new thing in the world for me to receive a formal welcome, and I do not know exactly what to say about it. I begin to feel the power that there is in Sympathy ; and I hope that the result of this Mission will show, that I have not been insensible to the kindness which you have manifested. With your permission, I intend to make myself at home. I do feel at home in such a meeting as this. In nothing do I discover such a change, as in the different feelings with which I now look upon Man and upon Society. I had no pleasure in mingling with society, when I was Orthodox. My belief was too earnest to admit of it. I believed that I was living on a demon-haunted earth, and I, for one, had no inclination to "crack jokes with the damned," as is reported of a certain D.D. of the Evangelical School. Now, there is no conflict between my theological opinions and my human feelings. I feel happy in myself, and I feel happy in Society. I do not intend to lose any of my religion, I do not think that I have lost any of it. My heart is as warm, my religious feelings are as warm, as my own life's blood. I must say, too, that I have found among Unitarians a religious life quite as high as I ever found among the Orthodox. I like the honesty of their professions. The finest thing I have seen among them is, that they make no pretensions to more religion than they really have.

I felt very unwell this forenoon, and even since I entered this room, I was beginning to fear that I should not be able to speak. I am always glad to be relieved from making a speech; but on the present occasion, to be silent would appear very cold, so I have mustered courage to open my lips. And as I am a comparative stranger among you, I have been thinking that, without turning the assembly into a Methodist class-meeting altogether, I might interest you by giving you a few particulars of my experience. Every man, they say, has a history ; and any one who has passed from the regions of hyper-Orthodoxy, to the regions of rational Christianity, may be expected to have a history. Of course it is but a brief outline that I can now give you.

My Father was a Scottish Presbyterian, and I received a sort of a religious education. I was brought up in the belief of Calvinism, and of the prevalent superstitions of Scotland. When about 14 years of age, I began to feel myself a sinner, and to seek for salvation. I read Alleine's Alarm, Boston's Fourfold State, Doddridge's Rise and Progress, Venn's Duty of Man, Scott's Force of Truth, Bunyan, and all the books of that school. For two years I prayed for Saving Faith, which, to my knowledge, never came in the way I expected it. I had the most confused notions of the way of salvation, long after I had begun to look for salvation through the cross of Christ. A little tract called "Christ is all" quite overwhelmed me, I remember, with its paradoxes ; yet it contained the very pith and marrow of the Evangelical system. It was not till my

third year at College that I got a clear idea of Saving Faith, as the simple belief of Saving Truth. It took me six months to comprehend this view of it. I then found, according to the phraseology of the school in which I learned it, that I had been making a Christ of my faith. I now saw how Christ was all. With this new insight began a new era. I should state now, however, that when I was 16 years of age, my Father sent me to College, to study for the ministry in the Established Church. I had the good fortune to gain the second Bursary at the competitive trial, which enabled me to prosecute my studies without depending on any Society or Committee, which paved the way for greater independence of thought than otherwise I should have dared to cherish. My intellectual life was awakened during my first session. The Professor of Latin was an excellent Teacher, and a man of a fine philosophic spirit. He had a great antipathy to grammar rules, and felt a sort of savage delight in bringing them into ridicule. He taught us to be guided by our own common sense, not by any rules, to trust our own judgments, and not to be hampered by the nonsense in the Rudiments. He revolutionized all my school notions of grammar and language, and it was under the influence of his spirit that I formed the resolution to think for myself on all subjects whatever.

At that time, the non-intrusion controversy was going on. I was a Moderate in church politics, as I was a Calvinist in theology. So was my Father. Contrary to his advice, I launched out into a little discussion now and then ; a very perilous thing when we are on the wrong side ; and so it proved in my case, for discussion led to research, and, by this process, I lost both my Calvinism and State-Churchism. My Father was very angry with me ; and now commenced my first struggle with external authority. As a sort of warning to me, my Father predicted that he believed that I would go on till I should actually get myself dipped. Why this was just what I was thinking of. He sent me to College to learn Greek, and I found in my Greek Dictionary that baptism meant immersion. The Free Church Secession took place, but I did not join it. My Father died shortly after ; and when his head was laid in the grave, I carried out my own views, got myself immersed in a running stream, one day in the middle of January, and a cold day it was ; but what of that ? I saw it to be right, and I had no alternative.

The study of the New Testament gave me a very different view of Christianity from anything I saw around me; and my efforts were now directed to the propagation of Primitive Christianity. I called myself a Christian and a Truth-Seeker, and without ordination, and without support, I set out to preach the Gospel. I mingled freely among all sects, and finally settled down as pastor of a church in Glasgow. This made no difference whatever with me, as regarded my internal liberty. I not only continued to call myself a Truth-Seeker,

but I was one; though I found that the very profession of such a spirit was regarded by the Orthodox as a virtual avowment of heresy. Of course they had no guarantee for my soundness in the faith, or of my denominational loyalty, and that was ground quite ample for suspicion. There were many predictions that I should laud in Unitarianism, if I continued my truth-seeking, a compliment this which is often unwittingly paid to Unitarianism.

Perhaps you wish to know how I became a Unitarian: well, I must go back a little. It was through the writings and speaking of Mr. James Morison and his followers that I got out of Calvinism. They go by the name of New Lights in Scotland, and possibly under that name you may have heard of them. I had the privilege of attending a course of lectures delivered by Mr. Morison to his students; and one day the subject of the Trinity came up for discussion. I was horrified to find that Mr. M. did not believe in the Trinity as it was generally held. His views were those of Adam Clarke. As discussion was allowed; I reminded them, for all the students were of his mind, of the passage which said that "there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." The citation of my passage was followed by a burst of laughter. Mr. M. informed me, to my mortification, that my text was from the Shorter Catechism, with which, indeed, I was better acquainted than with my Bible, rather a common occurrence in Scotland. The belief in the Trinity sunk within me that moment, I wondered how I could have been so foolish as to believe such a thing. I resolved, however, to search into it, first opportunity. Soon after, I got hold of a book, which advocated a species of high Arianism, and in looking through it, my eye was arrested by a passage, which ran thus, "To us there is but One God the Father, and One Lord Jesus Christ." I was confounded. I had never seen the passage, and I was pretty confident that there was no such passage. I argued with myself that if there were such a verse, how could there be any Orthodox! I was in a railway carriage at the time, and when I got home I consulted my Testament, and there was the passage staring me in the face. I never believed in the Trinity afterwards. I believed that Jesus was the Son of God, so did the Orthodox. I believed, also, that as Son he was inferior to the Father, another section of the Orthodox helped me to this conclusion; so that I considered myself superlatively Orthodox. I held to the Atonement, and to the Evangelical system generally, and my preaching continued the same. Afterwards my mind veered round to a view of the subject somewhat similar to Sabellianism, and I imagined that I had got back to perfect Orthodoxy; but this did not last long. The personality of the Spirit dropped out of my Creed; but I clung to the personality of the Logos. But what evidence had I for the

personality of the Logos any more than for the Spirit! There was "The face of the Lord," "The voice of the Lord," as well as the "Word of the Lord," and the "Spirit of the Lord," and I saw that I could make out thirty persons as well as three. Ere I was aware, I was a Unitarian. My Sabellianism tanght me that the Father, the Word and the Spirit were one person ; but I could not see that the Father, Jesus, and the Spirit, were one person ; and I saw that this was never the way in which divines put it, I saw that the Logos of John and the Christ of Paul were divine, but not personal, and that Jesus was personal, but not divine; or not divine, save as the Logos or the Christ were manifested in him. But I had a hundred additional reasons, which I cannot enter into.

I must go back again. Morisonianism did not suit me. I did not at first know why ; but I discovered it. Its appeals were solely to the understanding ; salvation depended upon an intellectual act once performed, and performed at the command of the will. Religion with them came in through the five senses. They did not appeal to the religious sentiment ; they did not believe in the religious sentiment. They were more under the bondage of the letter than even the Calvinists. I began to sigh after a more spiritual system. I gave up the idea that faith was an intellectual assent to an intellectual proposition, and saw that the Calvinistic idea here was better, in making faith a moral state of the soul produced directly by the Spirit. But the man who led me out of the system altogether, and out of the whole region of Orthodoxy, was a person of the name of Thomas Erskine. If I omitted to speak of Erskine, I should be omitting the half of my mental history. He was the first Theological writer who ever wielded over me the influence of a Teacher. I was now willing to become his disciple He was of the same school as William Law and the early Quakers, and from his works I received new life ; in fact, a new consciousness, which enabled me to see things in an entirely new light. Under his guidance, I saw the grand distinction between Religion and Theology, from which I found great relief. I saw, also, the difference between religion as a law and religion as a life. His views were based upon a true philosophy of man, and that was the secret of their power ; for, after all, it is a philosophy, right or wrong, which is at the foundation of all systems. His views suited me, and I found that, after which I had been longing. My present sentiments are the simple development of his principles. The Atonement vanished away, I mean the popular view of the Atonement ; indeed I began to look upon our popular theologies as I should upon the mythologies of India or Persia. My views grew till I found that I had outgrown my early faith. I never advanced from one position to another till I found that in my most advanced position my feet were upon a rock. I have not thrown off old

opinions, save as the growth of new ones rendered it unavoidable. I have always advanced reluctantly. I had, indeed, abandoned myself to the pursuit of truth; but with the full determination at first to remain Orthodox, or even to become more Orthodox. I did not know what was in store for me; but I kept faithful to my principle, though there have been occasions when faithfulness to it was extremely mortifying. People have had words to say about one given to change; yet I cannot see how I could have avoided arriving at the conclusions I have reached. I must apologize for any incoherence there may be in my statement, and beg again to tender you my grateful acknowledgments for your friendly welcome.

The Stewards, at the conclusion of Mr. Sym's address, placed fruit of various kinds on the tables, and an interval of ten minutes was passed in friendly conversation by the company, after which, on the call of the Chairman,

T. M. Greenhow, Esq., of Newcastle, and Mr. C. Burney, Jun., of Gateshead, in strong and appropriate terms, moved and seconded, "That this Association have great pleasure in welcoming, on this occasion, their respected friend, the Rev. Edward Tagart, of London; in expressing their cordial approbation of his enlightened, clear, impressive, and Scriptural statement of the Faith in Christ, and the moral, and spiritual, and benevolent power of his discourses; their high appreciation of his indefatigable labours in the advocacy and maintenance of Christian truth, freedom, and righteousness, and their best wishes for his continued usefulness and happiness."

On this motion being put from the Chair, the company rose and testified their approval of it by general acclamation.

The Chairman briefly addressed Mr. Tagart, thanking him for the services rendered by him on this occasion, as well as at former times in Scotland, to unpopular truth, struggling with fashionable error, and likewise for his untiring labours on behalf of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

The Rev. E. Tagart said he was not altogether new to scenes of this sort; he was not unaccustomed to kind and friendly receptions in Societies assembled for the propagation of their holy and beautiful faith; but he confessed he was not a little overwhelmed and depressed by the too kind and too flattering terms with which the Chairman had been pleased to welcome him, and express gratification with his humble services. This expression of their kindness, he believed, was far more owing to the strength of their own convictions, and the purity of their own feelings as to the worth of the principles which he had attempted humbly to advocate, than to any merit which the advocacy itself possessed. He came to assemblies of this sort, not with the hope that he could impart any thing, but with the certainty that he should receive increased energy, warmth, and zeal, for the propagation of the great principles which he professed.

He had lately had the pleasure of attending a gratifying meeting at Leeds, and now he received a fresh assurance in the heartiness with which this Northern Association were engaged in the great work to which they had pledged themselves, that so far was their Unitarian system from being a cold negation, a mere heartless system; so far from its exhibiting signs of extinction and decay, there was light in it, and latent heat, producing new and fresh developments, right and grand results. He had been convinced of this in listening to that exposition of his principles which had been given by their Missionary. He could not help congratulating this Association, in having secured the services of a gentleman who had passed through so many phases of thought and feeling, and who had thereby arrived at a stronger conviction than they themselves could feel, of the adaptation of Unitarian views to the moral and religious deficiencies, but at the same time, aspirations and desires of the poor and humbler classes, nay, of all classes of the community.

He (Mr. Tagart) could not help contrasting the very different circumstances in which he had been placed from those of Mr. Syme. It was not after painful exercises of mind that he had become a Unitarian. Born and bred such, as far as a man could be, he must say that the experiences of life had been greatly in his favour. So far from this being the first scene in which he had received a far better welcome than he thought he deserved, in looking back to his varied experiences, he found that a welcome had everywhere been ready for him. He fancied when he came into the world his parents welcomed him, and a kindly Providence smiled upon him. A welcome seemed everywhere to greet him as he walked upon the face of the earth. He had heard many sweet voices of nature, and they all spoke a welcome. The influences that surrounded him had been a welcome. Instead of books being put into his hands which distressed and harassed him, the first book which was given to him was Mrs. Barbauld's prose hymns for children, and he hoped no young person in that place was unacquainted with that book. He remembered the question being put to him, as he grew familiar with religious thoughts, whether he should like to exercise the Ministry. That proposition was welcome; he hailed it almost with delight; and the *Alma Mater* of Manchester College, York, was the Institution which shed its selectest influences upon him. Early he became connected with a Congregation whose views were in accordance with those which he had adopted. His intellectual inquiries were always conducted with the greatest freedom; and they had deepened his convictions of the great worth of the principles for which they were that day assembled. The only difficulty found in connection with their simple faith was, that it was too high and too pure for them always to do justice to it. The weakness of human nature dragged them down to earth when they would rise to heaven. Their religion, when it

could be realized, lifted them above themselves, and called them to renew those aspirations, which, while they walked on earth, made them the children of God and heirs of heaven. No, it was not the objections from without—it was not the arguments of intellectual opponents—still less was it the unhappy misapprehensions and misrepresentations of those who knew not the foundation on which their views rested, which caused their chief difficulty ; but it was the evils to which the Apostle of Truth pointed—the pride of life, the lust of the eye, and the power of the world—these things assailed them, and these things drew away numbers from their ranks, who should be with them, and made them feel how rare was an attachment to truth in its purity and integrity ; and how difficult it was to keep alive those divine sentiments of devotion and benevolence which alone made them the true disciples of Christ.

He should return to the scene of his ordinary labours, grateful for the opportunity he had enjoyed of witnessing the aid rendered by this Association to that with which he was connected. He had not come to see the nakedness of the land, but rather to see its richness and promise—the promise, he trusted, of an abundant and glorious harvest. The gentleman who had given them his experience was evidently one well fitted, by his converse with different phases of the mind, by the number of books he had read, and by the arguments he had weighed and contrasted—well fitted to enter into, and sympathize with, the feelings of the less-favoured of his fellow-creatures ; and he trusted that gentleman would see new means and new methods by which they could lay stronger hold of those minds and hearts which were yet loose from every religious connection, and who, by the constant misrepresentations of their simple faith, had no idea of the hold which that faith was capable of taking of the mind in its true and simple honesty, and of the heart in its innocent and natural purity. What they wanted was now a freer scope, as it were, with the general mind. Their own history as a sect had connected them with the educated of the middle class, and with their intellectual culture they had retained a little of their aristocratic predilections. But they must now, as Unitarian Christians, seek the sympathy of the masses. They must push forwards, and lead on to the reform of those institutions which their forefathers had founded with a liberal intent, but which their successors had made exclusive and narrow.

The rev. gentleman proceeded to describe, in an impressive manner, his emotions on viewing the new streets and buildings of the town, and especially in surveying the High-Level Bridge, in connection with the old Norman fortress, indicating as they did, the onward march of time. In allusion to these external indications of progress, he adverted to the advance of the human mind, which was not to be for ever spell-bound by vain superstitions. We must endeavour more and more

by such meetings as these, and by their confidence in each other, which he believed was peculiar to Unitarians, gradually to imbue others with their views and principles. He next adverted to the project which was in contemplation of building a new chapel for the Newcastle congregation, in a more suitable part of the town than that where the present chapel was situated. This and other similar projects which had been executed in other towns, showed that there was more life in their body than they sometimes gave themselves credit for. But, while building chapels, their Ministry itself ought to be well provided for. When he saw the small number of students in the Academy at Manchester, he was inclined to think the zeal of their body, English Presbyterian and Unitarian, was divided into channels which absorbed, perhaps, too much of their strength, while the Ministry itself had been repressed, though not undervalued. When he thought of the Ministry of the Rev. William Turner; the important lead which he took in this town in connection with the Literary and Philosophical Society; when he remembered the rank that gentleman held, not only in theology, but also in science, and his valuable publications on education; and when he called to mind such names as Dr. Rees and Dr. Kippis, he sometimes feared that in the absence of sufficient encouragement to an educated Ministry, their body might lose its former rank in regard to the intellectual advancement of the people. Still the great beauty of their faith was the strong sympathy which it tended to develope between man and man, that they should ever seek to exemplify that charity which sought to extenuate or to remove the intellectual mistakes, and the moral wanderings of their fellow-men, though they might not be able to sustain it in its full purity. Upon this point he would quote a few lines from a poet now forgotten, but this company would receive them as new :—

"Love were too great happiness
For wretched mortals to possess,
For could it hold inviolate
Against those cruelties of fate
Which all felicities below
By rigid laws are subject to,
It would become a bliss too high
For perishing mortality.
'Twould bring to earth the joys above
For nothing goes to heaven but love."

The CHAIRMAN then proposed, "The Churches and Individual Brethren in connection with this Association, more especially the Rev. H. V. Palmer, of York, success to his Ministerial labours, and our best wishes for his health and happiness."

Rev. H. V. PALMER observed that he, too, had come out of the house of bondage, of so called Orthodoxy, and he could therefore sympathize with Mr. Syme in his interesting biography. It was, in his estimation, a privilege and a happiness to be a Unitarian. The longer he lived, and the more he

studied, the more did he feel the happiness he enjoyed, in humbly labouring to teach these doctrines, which, as Unitarians they professed. He believed that their religion was calculated, more than any other, to give peace to the heart, and fill the mind and soul with love to God, and love to their fellow-men. Under the influence of their faith they could go forth and view the beauties of nature, without thinking that they were under the ban of God. They could look upward to the sky and behold the vast mechanism of the starry heavens, without thinking it was all cursed. To Unitarians the wide world was a stage where God exhibited his love without any particle of hatred. They could look upon their children without thinking that they were children of the Evil Spirit. They were told in the Bible that man was created in the image of God, and under the influence of this religion he might grow in that image, following the example of their Master; having the same mind that was in him, they might grow more and more like their Father, until fitted to appear in his immediate presence. Unitarianism was "the truth as it is in Jesus." He had the firmest faith in its principles, and he believed it would go on "conquering and to conquer." They might neglect the talents which God had given them; they might refuse to labour, and thus delay the coming of that grand result; but come it would in God's good time. He sometimes thought when he sawt he small number of persons going into his little Chapel, and the streams of people going into the more popular places of worship, he should like to see greater numbers come to his chapel; but then he said to himself, what have these people done to spread knowledge? He never saw a Unitarian chapel in a town, but he knew there was a Mechanics' Institution in it also; the committees of Mechanics' Institutions were, in great part, Unitarians. He went to Ripon a short time ago, and did not know that any Unitarians were there; but he saw a benevolent old gentleman, who was introduced to him as the father of the Mechanics' Institution there, and whom he found to be a Unitarian. Mr. P. related an anecdote of a poor man who had been a Methodist, but who afterwards became a Unitarian, and when jeered at by his former companions, on account of his change of views, he told them he was 1849 years older than they were. Mr. P. concluded by exhorting all present to increased zeal and exertion. The young men, he said, should become local preachers. Mr. Syme could only be in one place at once, and they must send him an assistant. Theirs was the faith that enlightened the mind, purified the heart, and kindled affection in the soul. What their hands found to do, they should do with all their might.

Mr. Harris having briefly made acknowledgement for a vote of thanks moved by Rev. M.C. Frankland, and seconded by Mr. Braithwaite, a Hymn was given out by Mr. Tagart and sung by the company, and the meeting was closed by Mr. Harris with the Lord's Prayer.

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